

REMARKS

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed on May 9, 2005. Claims 1, 5, 8 and 15 have been amended and claim 16 has been cancelled. Claims 1-15 and 17-18 now remain in the application. Applicant notes and appreciates Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 5, 12 and 16. In view of the foregoing amendments, as well as the following remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in complete condition for allowance and requests reconsideration of the application in this regard.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,076,631 to Lord Jr. ("Lord"), U.S. Patent No. 6,308,488 to Hoshino ("Hoshino") and U.S. Patent No. 5,947,547 to Deeks et al. ("Deeks"). Claim 1 has been amended to include allowable subject matter. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to recite one of the elements included in dependent claim 5. As stated in the Office Action, claim 5 includes allowable subject matter. (Office Action, p. 3). Thus, claim 1 has now been amended to recite the allowable subject matter recited in claim 5. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements recited in amended independent claim 1 and the rejection should be withdrawn. Moreover, as claims 2-7 depend from allowable independent claim 1 and further as each of these claims recites a combination of elements not taught or suggested by the prior art of record, Applicant submits that these claims are allowable as well.

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lord, Hoshino and Deeks. Claim 8 has been amended to include allowable subject

matter. In particular, claim 8 has been amended to recite the subject matter included in claim 16. As stated in the Office Action, claim 16 includes allowable subject matter. (Id.). Thus, claim 8 has now been amended to recite the allowable subject matter recited in claim 16. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements recited in amended independent claim 8 and the rejection should be withdrawn. Moreover, as claims 9-14 depend from allowable independent claim 8 and further as each of these claims recites a combination of elements not taught or suggested by the prior art of record, Applicant submits that these claims are allowable as well.

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lord and Hoshino. Claim 15 has been amended to recite the allowable subject matter included in dependent claim 16. (Id.). Claim 16 has thus been cancelled. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the combination of elements recited in amended independent claim 15 and the rejection should be withdrawn. Moreover, as claims 17 and 18 depend from allowable independent claim 15 and further as each of these claims recites a combination of elements not taught or suggested by the prior art of record, Applicant submits that these claims are allowable as well.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing response, this application is submitted to be in complete condition for allowance and early notice to this affect is earnestly solicited. If there is any issue that remains which may be resolved by telephone conference, the

Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned in order to resolve the same and expedite the allowance of this application.

Applicant does not believe that any fees are due in connection with this response. However, if such petition is due or any fees are necessary to complete this communication, the Commissioner may consider this to be a request for such and charge any necessary fees to deposit account 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

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